

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 05298 251348Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SPTA-02 L-03 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02

H-01 DODE-00 /043 W

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8116

INFO PANCANAL

USSOUTHCOM

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, US

SUBJECT: EMBASSY RECOMMENDS SPECIAL CONGRESSIONAL
CONSULTATIONS

1. TRYING TO DEFINE WHAT CAN AND CAN'T BE DONE PRIOR TO
THE OCTOBER 1, 1979, TREATY EFFECTIVE DATE (OR IN SOME
CASES APRIL 1) MAY BE ONE OF THE GREATEST PROBLEMS IN THE
WAY OF SMOOTH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TREATY. WE MUST AVOID
PREMATURE "IMPLEMENTATION" BUT WE MUST ALSO PREPARE THE
WAY SO WELL THAT OCTOBER 1 LOOKS JUST LIKE SEPTEMBER 30,
EXCEPT THAT DIFFERENT PEOPLE ARE IN CHARGE HERE AND THERE.
THE MORE STRICTLY WE INTERPRET "PRE-IMPLEMENTATION", THE
MORE DIFFICULT IT WILL BE FOR US TO MAKE THE TRANSITION
AND THE MORE FRUSTRATED OUR NEW PARTNERS THE PANAMANIAN
ARE LIKELY TO BECOME.

2. IN PANCANAL, IN SOUTHCOM AND IN THE EMBASSY THERE
MAY BE DIFFERING OPINIONS ON WHAT WOULD ENTAIL PRE-
IMPLEMENTATION -- AND MORE SPECIFICALLY WHAT "CONGRESS"
WOULD CONSIDER TO BE ILLEGITIMATE OR PREMATURE ACTIVITY.
THESE QUESTIONS RUN FROM THE SMALLEST TO THE MOST
IMPORTANT MATTERS, AND WE BELIEVE THAT DOZENS OF THEM
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WILL ARISE. AND SINCE, FROM A PRACTICAL STANDPOINT,
CONGRESS WILL BE AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FACTOR IN WHAT
WE DECIDE IS PRE-IMPLEMENTATION AND WHAT IS NOT, WE
RECOMMEND THAT A SPECIAL CONSULTATION PROCEDURE BE SET
UP WITH THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS TO
DISCUSS OUR PLANNING AND RELATED ACTIVITIES ON A REGULAR
BASIS AND SPECIFICALLY TO CHECK WHEN WE HAVE SOME DOUBT

ABOUT WHETHER A GIVEN ACTION WOULD RAISE CONGRESSIONAL HACKLES. RATHER THAN FORCE US IN THE FIELD (OR IN WASHINGTON, FOR THAT MATTER) TO SPECULATE ON WHAT WOULD OR WOULD NOT BE PERMISSIBLE WITH CONGRESS, WHY NOT JUST ASK? IT WOULD, OF COURSE, BE UP TO US WHAT WE RAISED WITH THE COMMITTEES AND WHAT ACTION WE WOULD TAKE ON THEIR ADVICE.

3. IT WOULD SEEM APPROPRIATE FOR OFFICIALS FROM BOTH STATE AND DEFENSE TO BE INVOLVED IN THESE CONTACTS. IT MIGHT BE USEFUL FOR THE PERSONS INVOLVED TO SPEND TWO OR THREE DAYS ON THE ISTHMUS LEARNING FIRST HAND ABOUT PROBABLE PROBLEM AREAS. JORDEN

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